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A NEW OBSERVATORY (VALKENBURG, HOLLAND).

BY REV. JOHN G. HAGEN, S. J.

A small observatory has been erected at Valkenburg, Holland. It consists mainly of an equatorial of nine-inch aperture, and belongs to the Jesuit College of that city. The dome is constructed on the top of the building, at the northeast corner, the walls having been built especially strong for the purpose. The room under the dome contains a sidereal clock and switchboard, with relays, sounder, and chronograph, thus affording connections with the equatorial, with an outside pier for time observations, and with the telegraph office of the city. The same room serves as a library, which, it is hoped, will contain the publications of other observatories. This room, as well as the dome and all parts of the equatorial, is lighted by electricity from the dynamo of the college and a storage battery.

This new observatory has a special interest for Americans, since the equatorial is entirely of American make: the mounting by Mr. G. N. SAEGMULLER, and the optical part by Mr. J. CLACEY, both of Washington. The instrument had been especially constructed for and exhibited at the World's Fair in Chicago. It has the latest improvements, and is exceedingly light, the center-piece of the tube, the cell, and the eye-end being of aluminium. It contrasts very favorably with the clumsy mountings of some instruments of equal or even smaller aperture in European observatories. One of the finest features of the telescope is its adjustment in azimuth and altitude, close to the polar axis. Under this axis is the driving-clock, visible and accessible

through four glass doors, and provided with electric control. The weights of this clock are inside the round iron pillar. Declinations are set from the eye-end of the telescope by means of a microscope, and Right Ascensions directly (without the hour-angle) on a dial, which is moved by a sidereal clock at the lower end of the polar axis. Just under this dial is a small hand-wheel for setting in R. A. The large base of the mounting is under the floor, and the observing chair can be moved quite close to the slender pillar. This chair was made by the carpenter of the college, on the well-known plan of Professor HOUGH of Chicago. The switchboard also presents an American appearance. It is provided with the "spring-jacks" used in the Western Union telegraph offices, and the connections of the wires are arranged on the plan of the Harvard College, Georgetown College, and Lick Observatories. The chronograph is of the American type, with cylindrical barrel, and was constructed by the mechanician of the college, according to plans kindly furnished by Mr. SAEGMULLER, who also made a present of the wheels and governor for the driving-clock. The batteries are the "Edison-Lalande," furnished by BUNNELL & Co. of New York, and are admired for their constancy and cleanliness.

The Dutch Ministry kindly allowed the free import of this "telescope with accessories, for the sake of instruction." The fitting-up of the observatory was intrusted to the Director of the Georgetown College Observatory, Father J. G. HAGEN, S. J., and his plan was to adapt it principally to the observation of variable stars. The light construction and the comparatively short focus of the instrument render it especially fit for this purpose, and superior to any telescope now exclusively devoted to this branch of astronomy. Its first Director, Mr. Jos. HISGEN, S. J., is already known to the readers of the *Astronomische Nachrichten* by his observations of variable stars, which he made at the Georgetown College Observatory, in preparation for his new position.